

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. – 17. (Cancelled)

18. (New) A method for the preparation of three-dimensional casting skins having a leather-like surface, comprising the steps of:

applying a pulp comprising leather fibers, suspending agents, binders and optionally additives, to the porous surface of a vacuum tool having the geometry of the three-dimensional molded part;

applying a vacuum in the vacuum tool to deposit said pulp to a desired layer thickness along said porous surface to form a casting skin; and

transferring the casting skin to a press tool and applying pressure to remove moisture and densify the casting skin.

19. (New) The method according to claim 18, further characterized in that said casting skin is profiled.

20. (New) The method according to claim 18, further characterized in that said casting skin is dried.

21. (New) The Method according to claim 18, further characterized in that said casting skin is provided with a surface finish.

22. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that the porous surface of said vacuum tool if formed from a material selected from the group consisting of a sintered powder metal, a ceramic, a metal foam, and a plastic foam or screen.

23. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that said pulp contains leather fibers in an amount of from 0.1 to 10% by weight.

24. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that said pulp contains leather fibers in an amount of from 0.5 to 2% by weight.

25. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that the surface properties of the casting skin can be modified by embossing, grinding, plasma treatment, corona treatment, sand blasting or shot blasting.

26. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that a pulp is employed which contains leather fibers of a length of from 0.1 to 15 mm.

27. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that a pulp is employed which contains leather fibers of a length of from 0.3 to 3 mm.

28. (New) The method according to claim 18 characterized in that said binder is selected from the group consisting of natural rubber, polyurethane, polyacrylates, dispersions of acrylic esters, vinyl esters and isobutylene polymers and mixed polymers, or a vinyl acetate.

29. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that said binder is present in an amount of from 10 to 50% by weight, based on the dry weight.

30. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that said binder is present in an amount of from 15 to 30% by weight, based on the dry weight.

31. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that the casting skin has an average dry layer thickness of from 0.1 to 6 mm.

32. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that the casting skin has an average dry layer thickness of from 0.1 to 2 mm.

33. (New) The method according to claim 20, characterized in that the drying step comprises the polymerization, polycondensation, cross-linking and/or film forming of the binder.

34. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that a mold with mobile slides for forming undercuts is employed.

35. (New) The method according to claim 18, characterized in that the casting skin is released from the surface of the vacuum tool and provided with a foam backing or injection-molded backing.

36. (New) The method according to claim 18 characterized in that a pulp is employed which further contains non-collagenous fibers.

37. (New) The method according to claim 36 characterized in that said non-collagenous fibers are selected from the group consisting of cellulose, cotton and/or plastic fibers.

38. (New) A three-dimensional molded part having a leather-like surface and obtainable by a method according to claim 18.

39. (New) The molded part having a leather-like surface according to claim 38, comprising furniture, clothing, accessories, installation parts, veneers and trims.

40. (New) The molded part according to claim 39, characterized in that said trim are selected from the group consisting of floor trims, pillar trims, trunk trims, door trims, dashboard trims, switches, gearshift levers, seat cushions, seat rests, doorknobs and steering wheel covers.